

**SUMMARY OF THE
ON-SITE ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
MARCH 06, 2002**

The On-Site Assessment Committee of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) met by teleconference on Wednesday, March 06, 2002, at 1:00 p.m., Eastern Daylight Time (EDT). Chairperson Mr. Alfredo Sotomayor, of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, led the meeting. A list of Action Items is given in Attachment A. A List of Participants is given in Attachment B. *The purpose of the meeting was to address items of importance identified in the Agenda.*

INTRODUCTION

Mr. Sotomayor called the meeting to order by taking roll call and reviewing the agenda.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Marlene Moore announced that she is offering a Basic Assessor Training course in May in California and in Chicago in October 2002. She is also considering holding a session in the summer, somewhere on the East coast.

Mr. Sotomayor received, through Mr. Jack Hall, a series of papers from the Methods and Data Comparability Board (MDCB) recommending NELAC as the desired national mechanism for accrediting environmental laboratories. These papers are currently undergoing minor revisions and will be reviewed at the next MDCB meeting. Mr. Sotomayor offered to forward the papers to committee members that were interested in reviewing them.

The 21st Annual National Conference on Managing Environmental Quality Systems will be held April 8-11, 2002, in Phoenix, AZ. Currently, Ms. Moore is scheduled to take part in the NELAC panel presentation.

TOPICS OF AGENDA

Status of Action Items

- Mr. Sotomayor summarized the agreement on the recommendations of the NELAP Accrediting Authorities On-Site SOP Subgroup report and forwarded a document to the committee.

- Mr. Richard Sheibley drafted language on Confidential Business Information (CBI) for discussion at this meeting.
- Mr. Moore agreed to represent the On-Site Assessment Committee at the EPA Quality Assurance Conference in April.

Review, Discussion, and Approval of Minutes

The committee reviewed the teleconference minutes of the February 20, 2002. They were approved and accepted as written.

Response to AAWG On-Site SOP Subgroup Recommendations

Mr. Sotomayor solicited final comments from the On-Site Assessment Committee on the document that he drafted. The committee agreed on the final response and Mr. Sotomayor will relay it to the NELAP Accrediting Authorities subgroup.

CBI Language Review and Discussion

Mr. Sheibley reported that he had revised and distributed the draft Confidential Business Information (CBI) language for review and discussion by the On-Site Assessment Committee. Mr. Sheibley added language to acknowledge that CBI is subject to the laws and regulations of an accrediting authority's state, when such laws and regulations exist. He indicated that if there were no applicable State laws, then CBI would be covered by Federal Title 40CFR Part 2(b).

Mr. Sheibley made additional text changes, but felt the section needed further language revisions. It was suggested that the language state that each accrediting authority must have procedures to cover CBI and include a few guidelines to be used until a determination is made regarding whether materials are CBI. This language is needed to protect the interests of the laboratories. At the very least, there should be protection equal to that afforded under 40CFR Part 2(b). It was stated that it is important for the accrediting authorities to be upfront with the laboratories and inform them whether CBI would or would not be open for discovery and where CBI would be maintained, in light of a state's "open records" regulations.

Mr. Sheibley will revise the second paragraph to include language regarding disclosure by accrediting authorities to laboratories. Ms. Moore stated that this information should be reiterated at the time of requesting documents and perhaps be included in the application package as well.

Mr. Sheibley requested comments and suggestions to his draft CBI language no later than March 29, 2002. He will incorporate and draft the new language for review at the April 3 On-Site Assessment Committee

teleconference.

Assessor Forum Group Discussion

Mr. Sotomayor distributed the summary of the first Assessor Forum Subgroup meeting. He also sent a request to Ms. Silky Labie requesting a spot on the registration form to identify registrants as assessors. Mr. David Friedman is investigating the possibility of holding an electronic forum, which will further be discussed at the next subgroup meeting. Also discussed was how to communicate interpretation of the standards to the laboratories in a more formal fashion and the practical implications of making this happen. Mr. Sotomayor requested suggestions be sent to the subgroup for discussion.

Another option the subgroup is reviewing is the possibility of holding an assessor internet teleconference. This option is a possibility but may require more time to implement. The On-Site Assessment Committee feels that it would be more feasible to hold regional, rather than national assessor meetings, at this time. The Assessor Forum Group will meet by teleconference again on March 8, 2002.

Appendices Consolidation Discussion

Mr. Sotomayor reported that Mr. Jack Hall had distributed a new version of Appendix D. This is a preliminary draft that includes some comments received at NELAC 7i. Ms. Mimi Uhlfelder is currently working on consolidating both appendices into Appendix C. Discussion was deferred until the next On-Site Assessment Committee teleconference.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other issues to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

NEXT TELECONFERENCE

The next teleconference is scheduled for March 20, at 1:00 p.m., EST.

**ACTION ITEMS
ON-SITE ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
MARCH 06, 2002**

Item No.	Action	Date to be Completed
1	Send comments on CBI language to Mr. Shiebley. (Committee)	03/29/02
2	Redraft language on CBI section of Chapter 3 for discussion. (Sheibley)	4/03/02
3	Report on efforts to consolidate Appendices C and D. (Uhlfelder, Hall, Sheibley)	03/20/02
4	Send Committee's response to NELAP AAs SOP subgroup recommendations. (Sotomayor)	03/29/02
5	Meet to discuss assessor forum possibilities. (Sotomayor, Friedman, Hickman, Moore)	03/08/02

**PARTICIPANTS
ON-SITE ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
MARCH 06, 2002**

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